

TOWN OF MERRILLVILLE  
TOWN COUNCIL MEETING  
October 14, 2014

**CALL TO ORDER:** 6:35 P.M.

**INVOCATION:** Father Pat Gaza – retired from S.S. Monica & Luke & St. Mark Catholic Churches

**PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ROLL CALL:** All members were present.

**PETITIONS, COMMUNICATIONS, REMONSTRATIONS:**

Mr. Hardaway asked if there was a resolution regarding breast cancer awareness month. He was told that there was none scheduled on the agenda, but one could be included at the next meeting. Feeling it would be too late in the month, it was decided not to do so this year. A discussion regarding development of a calendar for such events followed.

The council also discussed preparation of a proclamation for St. Andrews Church's 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

**CONSENT AGENDA:**

Approval of the Accounts Payable Register Voucher dated October 14, 2014.

Approval of Town Council Meeting Minutes of September 23, 2014. Mr. Widing made a motion to approve and was seconded by Mr. Pettit. The motion was approved by a voice vote.

**STANDING COMMITTEES:**

**BUDGET & FINANCE:**

Mr. Goralczyk reminded the Council that later in the agenda we will be approving 2015's budget.

**PUBLIC WORKS:**

Mr. Pettit noted the leaf collection schedule is out and included in the newsletter. Paving is wrapping up.

**COUNCIL AFFAIRS:**

Mr. Spann had no report.

**PERSONNEL POLICY & EMPLOYEE BENEFITS:**

Mr. Goralczyk had no report. The Council discussed making changes to the death benefit insurance for employees. Mr. Pettit stated that a representative from Forest Financial is going to come in to discuss various scenarios and the monetary impact to the Town at a workshop.

**PUBLIC SAFETY:**

Mr. Widing announced "Trick-or-Treat" hours will be from 5:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. on Friday, October 31, 2014. Mr. Hardaway asked Mr. Petruch to be sure we have adequate patrols. He also thanked the Police Department and EMA for what they did for the Breast Cancer Walk at Hidden Lake on Sunday. Mrs. Barron thanked Joe Petruch and all the police officers who visited John Wood School and met with all the students. The students and teacher prepared letters and "goodie" bags for each of our police officers, thanking them for keeping them safe. Also, a special thanks to Frank Johnson who organized a run for the community of Merrillville, a mini-marathon, held September 28<sup>th</sup>. Thanks to the Police Department for their participation in it and also for making sure that the streets were set up to meet their needs. Thanks, also, to Public Works for supporting the event as well, making sure the streets were blocked off.

Mrs. Miano commented on her neighbor's positive remarks regarding a police officer who stopped and threw a football a few times for her young son in the lot across from her home. The community policing acts of this kind really have a positive impact. She thanked Mr. Petruch for that.

**PARKS & RECREATION:**

Mr. Spann announced the Town Hall Trick-or-Treat will take place Friday, October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2014 from 12:30 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Mrs. Miano reported on the Stefek Park (in Turkey Creek) Committee. With the help of Matt Lake, we will be renovating the park, putting in more tables and benches, not only for our seniors to enjoy, but for young families as well. We will be getting another playground set next spring, not only for that park, but also for the park in Savannah Ridge. There will be trees and bushes planted, and a raised bed for community gardens. This is going to be a great asset to our town. Stefek Park is the second largest park that we have, after the Pruzin.

**ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS:**

Mr. Goralczyk related information from the public meeting regarding the clean fill site. We can discuss it in more detail at the workshop next Wednesday at 6:00.

Mr. Hardaway congratulated Stormwater on following awards:

The Merrillville Stormwater Utility has received one of the highest honors, the Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence. This award recognizes Indiana's leaders who have implemented outstanding environmental strategies into their operations and decision-making processes. The Governor's Awards recognize

only exemplary efforts which demonstrate significant, measurable results and are innovative, comprehensive and thoroughly documented.

The 54th Court Bioremediation and Roadway Runoff Control project was recognized in the “Greening the Government” category and was a joint effort of the Merrillville Stormwater Utility, the Arsh Group, Blade Cutters Landscaping and Robinson Engineering, as well as supported by the surrounding residents, the Town Council and the Merrillville Environmental Resource Committee. A special review committee which included representatives from industry, academia, environmental organizations and government selected the Merrillville Stormwater Utility for this honor. The award was received during the Assn. of Indiana Solid Waste Management District’s annual conference in Bloomington on October 2<sup>nd</sup>. This is the first time that a stormwater utility received a governor’s award. Mr. Hardaway thanked Mrs. Barron for nominating the Town of Merrillville for this award. He also thanked Mr. Lake for his work on the project.

Additionally, the Indiana Association for Floodplain and Stormwater Management, Inc. (INAFSM) awarded the “Outstanding Stormwater Project” to the Merrillville Stormwater Utility at its 2014 Annual Conference in September at Brown County State Park in Nashville, Indiana, for the 54th Court Bioremediation and Roadway Runoff Control project. This award recognizes the most outstanding stormwater project studied, designed or constructed by a firm for a local unit of government or a private entity in the State of Indiana. The rain garden is located in the *cul de sac* area near Maryland Street and Carolina Street and 54<sup>th</sup> Court. He commended the Town of Merrillville and Mr. Lake for these awards and the positive impact it has on the town.

Mr. Lake related the results of the IDEM audit of the Stormwater program. We were the first out of about one hundred eighty five communities to be audited for pollution prevention for municipal operations. The state coordinator said we’re setting the bar very high.

Mr. Pettit initiated a conversation about retention ponds in the Town and would like to schedule a meeting/workshop regarding the issues related to the retention ponds.

#### **ELECTIONS & PUBLIC RELATIONS:**

Mrs. Miano had no report.

#### **ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT:**

Mr. Goralczyk had no report.

#### **UTILITY LIAISON:**

Mrs. Barron reported on the CAP program. We have now achieved the collection level necessary to receive a bench. We need to continue to collect so we can get another bench. She would like to see the program continue so we can receive other items that may be offered. Recycling programs are a healthy, good thing and we should continue and promote these types of programs.

#### **TOWN GOVERNMENT RE-ORGANIZATION:**

Mrs. Miano had no report.

#### **ADA COMPLIANCES:**

Mrs. Miano reported that Stefek Park is not ADA compliant and that will need to be addressed when the renovations are made.

#### **ABANDONED PROPERTIES:**

Mr. Hardaway announced that the committee will have a meeting next Wednesday at 10:00 a.m.

#### **GENERAL ORDERS:**

**FIRST READING ORDINANCES:** None

#### **SECOND READING ORDINANCES:**

**Ord. 14-26:** Be it ordained/resolved by the **Town of Merrillville** that for the expenses of **MERRILLVILLE CIVIL TOWN** for the year ending December 31, **2015** the sums herein specified are hereby appropriated and ordered set apart out of the several funds herein named and for the purposes herein specified, subject to the laws governing the same. Such sums herein appropriated shall be held to include all expenditures authorized to be made during the year, unless otherwise expressly stipulated and provided for by law. In addition, for the purposes of raising revenue to meet the necessary expenses of **MERRILLVILLE CIVIL TOWN**, the property tax levies and property tax rates as herein specified are included herein. Budget Form 4-B for all funds must be completed and submitted in the manner prescribed by the Department of Local Government Finance. This ordinance/resolution shall be in full force and effect from and after its passage and approval by the **Town of Merrillville**. Mr. Pettit made a motion to approve and Mrs. Barron seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion was approved by a 7/0 roll call vote.

**Ord. 14-28:** An ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, appropriating additional monies within various funds for the year 2014 not included in the current budget. It is necessary and prudent to provide for these additional appropriations for the 2014 salary raises resulting from the revenue of the local option income tax. Mrs. Barron made a motion to approve and Mr. Widing seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, 7/0.

**Ord. 14-29:** An ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, appropriating additional monies within Parks Non-reverting fund for the year 2014 not included in the current budget. The following sum was not included, but in order to provide for the payment of certain obligations and contractual services and to appropriate

additional monies to support the 2014 budget for contractual supplies for a sum of \$25,000. Mr. Widing made a motion to approve and Mr. Pettit seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, 7/0.

**Ord. 14-30:** An ordinance of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, transferring monies of the 2014 budget within the Parks and Recreation budget for a decrease of maintenance crew, \$12,000, unemployment, \$2,000, garage and motor supplies, \$3,000, and an increase of part-time custodian, \$6,000, office supplies, \$1,000, gasoline, \$2,000, other supplies, \$3,000 and contractual, \$5,000, for a total sum of \$17,000 decrease, \$17,000 increase, no change. Mr. Spann made a motion to approve and Mr. Widing seconded the motion. There was no public comment. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, 7/0.

**RESOLUTIONS:**

**Res. 14-41:** A resolution of the Town of Merrillville, Lake County, Indiana, transferring monies of the 2014 budget within the Merrillville Road TIF fund. Mrs. Barron made a motion to approve the resolution and Mr. Pettit seconded the motion. The motion was approved by a voice vote.

**BZA ACTIONS:**

None

**OLD BUSINESS:**

Mr. Pettit related two items for old business. Under Mr. Goralczyk's Economic Development Report, the RDC, earlier this evening, passed three resolutions which started the bond process and authorized the purchase of the Fieldhouse building for \$3.2 million which will house a new pharmaceutical company which will create fifty jobs in the Town of Merrillville with the potential to expand to 100-150 over the next several years. The second item relates to the South Shore extension. When we agreed to enter into the South Shore extension, at the workshop there was the discussion, and the Congressman did present that this was a thirty year commitment, that this would be a thirty year bond. On the floor, however, in the minutes that Bruce provided, the motion was made that this be a ten year. Mr. Pettit made a motion that we amend our previous motion to take in the thirty year period that the Congressman is looking for as a part of the bonding process for the South Shore extension. Mrs. Barron seconded the motion. Mr. Goralczyk abstained from voting due to a conflict of interest because he is employed by NICTD. Mr. Spann initiated a discussion on the bond repayment schedule. Mr. Bushemi noted that the issue for this motion is whether the Town is in agreement that due to an error in the adoption of a ten year commitment previously, that the intended commitment was thirty years, and if so, you would vote for this motion. The motion was approved by a roll call vote, 6/0, with one abstention.

Mr. Bushemi questioned whether the first reading of the 2015 budget ordinance, #14-26, was advertised as a public hearing in the legal notice. It was confirmed that it was. Mr. Bushemi suggested the minutes from the September 23, 2014 meeting be amended in the First Reading of Ordinance #14-26 to include the fact that it is a public hearing. Mr. Hardaway made a motion to amend the September 23, 2014 Council Meeting minutes to include the statement "This is the public hearing" in the public comment section of the first reading of Ordinance 14-26. Mr. Spann seconded the motion. There was no discussion. The motion passed by a roll call vote, 7/0.

**NEW BUSINESS:**

None

**PUBLIC COMMENT:**

All public comment is recorded on cassette tape and kept on file in the Clerk-Treasurer's Office at Town Hall.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**

Environmental Resource Commission Meeting, October 16, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.  
Plan Commission Public meeting, October 21, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.  
Workshop, October 22, 2014, 2014 at 6:00 p.m.  
Board of Zoning Appeals meeting, October 22, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.  
Town Council meeting, October 28, 2014 at 6:30 p.m.

**ADJOURNMENT:**

A motion to adjourn was made by Mr. Hardaway and seconded by Mr. Goralczyk.  
Meeting adjourned at 7:20 p.m.

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Carol Miano- President

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Eugene Guernsey, Clerk-Treasurer